

## Collection Development Policy Cabarrus County Public Library

### I. Introduction

The mission of the Cabarrus County Public Library is to *strive to provide for the cultural, educational and recreational needs of all citizens of Cabarrus County by providing equal access to a variety of books, materials, programs and other resources and information that meet and exemplify the diverse needs of those we serve. We will provide a customer service oriented, knowledgeable and well trained staff that will promote the enjoyment of reading and support the pursuit of lifelong learning.*

The purpose of this document is to outline Cabarrus County Public Library's policy regarding the development of the collection of materials. The Cabarrus County Public Library adheres to the following collection development principles:

- Cabarrus County Public Library serves customers of all ages and cultural backgrounds and realizes that customers have diverse needs, interests, value systems and reading abilities.
- Cabarrus County Public Library encourages parents to use the library with their children, and supports parents' rights and responsibilities to guide their children's reading and viewing of library materials. Library staff is available to assist parents and children to access and choose the most appropriate materials. The Cabarrus County Public Library does not make a determination of what children should read, view, or borrow from the library. The Library does not act *in loco parentis*, but provides materials that support parents and children's searches for diverse materials and ideas.
- Materials are provided in varying formats that meet the educational, recreational and informational needs expressed by customers and that represent divergent and alternative views. Not all materials will be suitable for, nor of interest to, all segments of the community. What may be offensive to one person may be significant and of value to another.
- Resource sharing is viewed as an additional means of providing customers access to a larger volume of materials and information.
- Purchase suggestions from customers are encouraged, both in general and in the development of special collections.
- Through a process of ongoing assessment and maintenance, collections are kept relevant in content and format and useful to customers.
- The Cabarrus County Public Library endorses and defends the concepts of intellectual freedom as protected by the United States Constitution. The Library adheres to the Library Bill of Rights as

outlined by the American Library Association and the ALA's Freedom to Read Statement. [See Appendices A and B.]

## **II. Legal Responsibility**

The ultimate responsibility for selecting materials for the Library rests with the Library Director, who in turn delegates selection responsibilities to the Branch Managers and their designees. Additional input is solicited from staff.

## **III. Criteria & Format**

In order to select materials, Cabarrus County Public Library uses the following criteria:

- Need for information in a subject area
- Suitability of reading level, interest, and treatment of subject for intended audience
- Accuracy
- Community and public interest
- Balance and diversity of viewpoint
- Timeliness
- Locally/regionally produced or authored. However, the fact that an author or producer is/was a resident of Cabarrus County does not necessarily mean that the library will automatically select or accept copies of the item.
- Quality of writing or performance
- Durability and quality of production
- Reputation and/or authority of author, editor, illustrator, publisher or performer
- Price, format and ease of use
- Positive reviews and/or widespread critical attention
- Inclusion in standard bibliographies and indexes
- Availability of material in other area libraries
- Space limitations. Shelving arrangements of materials are dictated by size of the branch library and size of the collection

### **A. Print Materials**

#### **1. Adult Print Materials**

##### **a. Non-fiction**

The library acquires materials of both permanent and current interest in all subjects, based upon the merits of a work in relation to the

needs, interests, and demands of the community. Each item is evaluated in its entirety and not on the basis of a particular section.

While a single standard cannot be applied to each work, the following general criteria are to be considered when selecting materials for purchase:

- authoritativeness of the writer and reputation of the publisher
- accuracy of information
- impartiality of opinion, or clearly stated bias
- timeliness of data
- adequate breadth and depth of coverage
- appropriateness and relevancy of subject to the library's users
- popular demand
- historical value
- availability of similar material within the community and other area libraries
- organization and style appropriate to the material and to the library's users
- good quality illustrations
- quality (determined by reviews)
- special features, such as bibliography and index
- durable binding and paper
- cost

Certain subject areas will follow further selection criteria:

- **Computer Books:** this collection will be comprised of books dealing with basic computer skills, major operating systems, major software packages, and other generally popular topics. Books dealing with certifications, specific computer languages, and less popular software packages will not be actively collected.
- **Art books:** this collection may include nude subjects depicted in paintings, sculptures or photography contained in books which meet selection criteria.

#### **b. Fiction**

Fiction collections are a large component of the library collections. These collections of popular and literary works are geared to the variety of reading interests and needs of the community.

Selections are based on one or more of the following criteria:

- quality (determined by reviews)
- potential use
- demand

When possible hardcover books with good binding are purchased. When a hardcover is not available, trade paperback editions are purchased. When no other editions are available, mass-market paperbacks are purchased.

The Library does not actively collect materials published by vanity presses or on-demand publishers.

## **2. Teen Print Materials**

### **a. Non-fiction**

Collection development of Teen Non-fiction will follow that of adult non-fiction. Teen non-fiction will be inter-filed in the adult non-fiction collection. The Teen non-fiction collection contains books written specifically for patrons from approximately 13 to 18 years of age.

### **b. Fiction**

The Teen fiction collection contains novels written specifically for patrons from approximately 13-18 years of age. Emphasis is on books that widen the boundaries of the adolescent's thinking, enrich his/her life, and help fulfill recreational or emotional needs. Plot, characterization, theme, writing style, and appropriateness for the teen reader are taken into account.

Selection criteria for adult fiction will also be followed when collecting Teen Fiction.

## **3. Children's Print Materials**

The Library's children's collections serve children from infancy through age twelve. Materials for this collection reflect the wide range of reading and interest levels that this age group includes. The children's collections exist to encourage children to develop a lifelong habit of reading for both recreational and informational needs. Materials are chosen based on positive reviews, popularity, award winners, children's classics and/or accuracy of factual content.

Children's collections include the following types of print resources: board books, paperbacks, picture books, fiction, easy and juvenile

nonfiction, beginning readers, and magazines. Reference and professional materials for story time are also kept at each location. Materials designed for adults who work with children are found in both the adult and children's non-fiction collections.

a. **Easy Picture Books**

The Easy collection is comprised of picture books of interest to all ages. Because the illustrations are the predominant feature, they are generally designed for adults to read to children.

b. **Beginning Readers**

Beginning Readers are intended for kindergarten through early third-grade readers. They are characterized by a controlled vocabulary, large print, heavy use of illustrations, and a limited number of pages.

c. **Juvenile Fiction**

This collection serves students from late third-grade through sixth-grade. The books feature age-appropriate vocabulary and subject matter, a limited number of pages and very few illustrations.

d. **Juvenile Non-fiction**

The Juvenile non-fiction collection includes materials to serve the information needs of preschoolers, elementary-age, and students through the sixth grade. The subject matter, vocabulary, organization and scope must be age-appropriate.

**B. Non-Print Materials**

**1. DVDs**

DVDs will be collected for both children and adults. These collections are intended to provide quality entertainment and educational materials for home use. The primary emphasis will be on acquiring well-reviewed popular materials and unique items not widely commercially available. The selection of visual productions intended for leisure-time or entertainment purposes shall be limited to works of lasting importance which are considered significant within their respective genres. The purchase of first-run feature films and other contemporary visual productions whose long-term significance is unknown shall be minimized. DVDs of popular musical groups will not be collected.

Movies with an "R" rating assigned by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) will be considered for the library collection if they meet the following criteria:

- Award winner or nominee for nationally recognized award.
- Critically acclaimed by national press.
- "R" rating is not assigned by the MPAA for: "explicit sex-related dialogue," "strong sexuality/nudity," "strong violence," "strong

sexuality,” or “pervasive sexuality.” Rating assignments will be checked at <http://www.mpaa.org/movieratings>.

Unrated versions of feature films will not be added.

## **2. Books-On-CD**

The Library's goal is to provide a collection of recorded instructional, educational, and quality literature that parallels most areas of the general collection. Every effort will be made to ensure that the print version of each title is available in the Library. Efforts are made to select on a variety of topics and to appeal to a range of interests. Both abridged and unabridged selections will be purchased.

In addition to the general criteria for selection of adult fiction and non-fiction books, the following criteria must be taken into account when selecting recorded books:

- authority and competency of producer
- artistic merit and reputation of the reader
- technical quality, i.e. sound quality
- packaging
- cost

The children's department will also collect Read-Alongs (CD and book). These read-alongs are designed for children to listen to the recording and read along with the book. Selection criteria for read-alongs follows that of Books-on-CDs and children's print materials.

## **3. Music CDs**

The Library's goal is to provide a collection of music on compact disc that is historically significant and of enduring popularity. The primary emphasis will be on acquiring well-reviewed materials and unique items. The selection of music shall be limited to works of lasting importance, which are considered significant within their respective genres. Selections will include instrumental and vocal recordings in the following genres: classical, new age/jazz, international, pop, rock, country, R&B, folk/Americana, bluegrass, blues, big band, musicals, soundtracks, and religious. The following criteria will be taken into account when selecting compact discs:

- authority and competency of producer
- artistic merit
- technical quality

- availability from vendors
- cost

Spoken Word CDs include speeches, poetry, and interviews. The selection criteria for this collection follows the same criteria for general book and CD selection.

Children's music CDs will have the following additional selection criteria:

- useful in the development of motor skills
- useful in teaching

## **C. Special Collections**

### **1. Reference**

Reference materials are those designed by the arrangement and treatment of their subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. They can provide quick, concise, and current information or they may serve as an index to other materials in the collection. Since they are typically used daily by the public and Library staff to answer specific questions, books in the reference collection are designated for use within the Library. Each library has a small Children's Reference collection.

In selecting for the reference collections, the primary criteria are the Library's users' information needs and the format in which it is available. Computer-based reference resources may be preferred over print publications in some instances. These decisions will be based upon cost, content, currency, and ease of use. In addition to the general selection criteria mentioned above, the following must be considered in acquiring materials for the reference collections:

- favorable reviews or inclusion in basic reference collection guides
- reputation of the author or publisher
- currency of information
- cost
- the expense of ongoing maintenance, especially in the case of serial publications that will require frequent updating

To a limited extent, items not falling strictly within the reference format, but in high demand by library users, may be included in the reference collection to allow maximum use, for example, civil service examination review texts, business plans, resumes, etc. in order to insure their availability in the library at all times.

## **2. Professional Reference**

A professional reference collection is housed at each library. There are two components to this collection. The first component of this collection contains books and other materials related to libraries and the library profession. These materials may be viewed by the public upon request, but may not be checked out. The other component of this collection contains materials for story time and other children's programs. These materials are generally duplicated in the circulating collection, depending on format. These materials are for staff use only.

## **3. Genealogy/Local History**

The Local History Room staff select, arrange, and make available for research, materials that aid in tracing family relationships, especially those families who played a role in the settling and developing of this area. Although the branch libraries may provide basic genealogical resources, the major collection is housed at the Concord library.

The genealogical collection aims to be most thorough and inclusive for those families who have lived in Cabarrus County, and the surrounding counties. Emphasis is also given to the State of North Carolina as a whole. Materials relating to the Southeast region and for major migratory routes into and out of this area are also collected.

The local history collection concentrates on the history of Cabarrus County, North Carolina, portions of South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

The collection contains audio, books, maps, newspapers and newspaper clipping files, film, microfilm and microfiche, photographs, papers, scrapbooks, CD-ROMS and other items of historical significance including journals, minutes, and ledgers. Based on the format, rarity and condition of the items they may be kept in fireproof locked files. These materials are available upon request and must be used in the presence of library staff.

Microfilm is collected in the following categories:

- Local newspapers
- Census
- Courthouse & military records
- Vital statistics (i.e. birth, marriage, death statistics)

- Government records

#### **4. Spanish Language**

Small Spanish language collections have been established at all Library locations, with larger collections in Concord and Kannapolis. The Spanish language collections contain both print and non-print materials. Selection of Spanish language materials will follow the same criteria as for general material selection. The following guidelines have also been established for this collection:

- Adult Fiction: a combination of translated English bestsellers and novels written originally in Spanish will be included. The emphasis will be placed on novels written originally in Spanish.
- Adult Non-fiction: this collection will contain general non-fiction titles that are representative of the regular adult non-fiction collection.
- Children's Books: when possible, bilingual (English/Spanish) children's print materials will be selected.

#### **5. Large Type**

Large Type materials are collected for adult fiction and non-fiction and, in a limited capacity, for children. Selection of Large Type materials will follow the same criteria for general material selection.

#### **6. Graphic Novels**

The library acquires manga and graphic novels for children, teens and adults on the basis of the literary or artistic merit and in response to demand. Materials which are not constructed to withstand normal library use and circulation are generally not acquired. Selections are based upon professional reviews, customer requests, and the popularity of styles, authors, characters, and series.

#### **7. Periodicals**

Periodicals are selected and evaluated annually to supplement the book collection and to provide materials on current issues, for research, and for general reading. The Library selects newspapers of local, state and national interest, depending on the place of publication, the breadth of coverage, and the degree of fulfillment of reference or recreational needs. Newspapers representing special groups, such as associations, religious, philosophical and political groups or organizations, may be

added sparingly, taking into consideration public demand and collection balance.

## **8. Computer Databases**

This category includes computer-based information resources available via the Internet. In most instances, this material may be available to registered library users at remote locations via the Library's Web page.

This collection includes, but is not limited to, citation or full-text databases and instructional multimedia programs. The following criteria will apply when considering computer-based resources for the collection:

- compatibility with available equipment and/or existing operating systems
- ease of use by library users, including enhanced searching capabilities
- price of print format versus electronic
- authority
- accuracy
- frequency of updating
- anticipated demand by library users
- impact upon staff for ongoing maintenance and updating of database
- training requirements for staff and the public
- remote access capability
- licensing fees and usage restrictions

The Library is also a member of NC LIVE (North Carolina Libraries for Virtual Education – [www.nclive.org](http://www.nclive.org)). The collection development of those databases is determined by the NC LIVE Librarians Council and does not necessarily reflect the policies of the Cabarrus County Public Library.

## **9. eBooks**

eBooks are selected on the same criteria as print materials, also taking in to consideration the following criteria:

- authority and competency of producer
- artistic merit and reputation of the reader
- technical quality, i.e. sound quality
- compatibility with standard formats

## **D. Other considerations**

## **1. Replacements**

While the Library attempts to maintain copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn due to loss or damage. In making a decision as to whether or not an item will be replaced, staff will consider the following factors:

- whether the item is still available and can be replaced
- whether another item or format might better serve the same purpose; whether there remains sufficient demand to replace the item
- whether updated, newer, or revised materials might better replace a given item; the number of copies held in the collection; the existing coverage of the subject within the collection; and the cost of mending versus the cost of replacement

## **2. Duplicates**

Duplicate copies of books will be acquired when patron demand requires it. Generally, when an item has five or more holds or demand is anticipated due to popularity of author or media attention, duplicated copies of a book will be acquired.

Duplicate copies of AV materials may be acquired as budget allows. Having duplicates for AV is not a high priority.

## **3. New Formats**

A format is defined as the medium through which information or entertainment is conveyed. The Library will consider new formats under the following circumstances:

- Public demand
- Demise of a current format
- Only source of information
- When a new format is more cost-effective than the current format

When a new format shall be investigated the following issues will be addressed:

- How would this format be funded?
- What selection policy would apply to this format?
- What Public Services concerns would arise (including adequate access)?
- What processing concerns would arise?
- What security concerns would arise?
- What publicity concerns would arise?

## **4. Donations/ Gifts**

The Cabarrus County Public Library welcomes gifts of both materials and money to purchase materials. Monetary gifts to purchase books are encouraged. Donors may specify types of materials to be purchased but are requested to keep in mind that specific titles may not be available. Materials purchased with monetary donations must be based upon library selection criteria.

Gifts of material from individuals are examined and may be added to the collection under the same criteria used for purchasing materials. Materials such as outdated textbooks and encyclopedia sets are not typically accepted. Gifts from institutions will not be considered except on a case by case basis. Gifts are accepted if the donor agrees that they may be added to the collection, sold at book sales, or otherwise disposed of at the discretion of the Library staff. All materials gifted become the property of the Cabarrus County Public Library. The Library does not assign a monetary value to donations for tax purposes, but does issue a receipt indicating the number of boxes or items given.

Gifts of fiction paperbacks may be added to our paperback collection. These are typically titles of recent imprint which would appeal to our patrons and follow the selection criteria for our regular fiction collection.

The library does not accept gift magazine subscriptions unless the appropriate selector has previously approved the title. In order to be eligible for acceptance the magazine must meet the general selection criteria for other materials. Gift magazine subscriptions received by the library that have not been previously approved or do not meet selection criteria will be discarded immediately upon receipt at the Library.

Gifts that are added to the collection are shelved with other materials in normal sequence. The Library does not provide special shelving or separate locations for gift items. Gift items, including memorials, are weeded according to the same criteria used for purchases, and are not retained indefinitely.

Gift books may be plated with a library bookplate if the donor wishes. Books donated as memorials are identified with an appropriate plate with the donor's approval.

## **5. Requests**

Patron requests are honored as they meet the selection criteria outlined in the collection development policy. Requests that are not purchased by the Library may be available via Inter-Library Loan (ILL).

## **6. Materials Not Purchased**

**Textbooks:** The Library does not buy textbooks used by the local schools, colleges or universities, as it is the responsibility of the libraries of those institutions to provide copies of these course materials to their students. Textbooks may, however, be purchased in those subject areas where there is little or no material in any other format or in those instances where they substantially add to the collection.

**Videocassettes, Records, & Music Cassette Tapes:** The Library does not actively collect videocassettes, records and music cassette tapes. These formats have all been replaced by newer formats.

**Hooked-On-Phonics:** The Library does not buy Hooked-On-Phonics. Other phonics learning tools such as books, videos and CD-ROMs are collected.

**Video Games:** The Library does not collect video games in any format.

**Braille Materials:** The Library maintains a small Braille collection though does not actively collect Braille materials. Materials for the blind can be acquired through the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Information on the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped can be found at all Library locations.

## **7. Weeding**

Material is typically withdrawn from a collection because:

- The item is in poor physical condition
- The item is no longer circulating regularly
- The item is a duplicate of a title that is not in demand
- The item contains outdated information and is of no widespread historic or reference interest
- The item no longer meets other current selection criteria

Any material withdrawn from the collection remains the property of Cabarrus County, but may be sold at book sales in the library or donated to non-profit groups.

Decisions on weeding materials will be made primarily by the person responsible for selecting materials for that collection.

## **8. Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Should a member of the community question the place of a book or other material in the collection, he or she may submit a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form to the Library Director. [See Appendix C.] This form is available in all Library locations. After completing this form the following procedure will be used:

1. The Director will answer the request in writing within fourteen working days.
2. Patron accepts written statement from Director or patron rejects statement and requests in writing a hearing with the Library Board.
3. Library Director forwards request to the Library Board Chairman. At the Chairman's discretion, an emergency meeting can be called according to the rules stated in the By-Laws or the hearing can be scheduled at the next Board meeting. The Board Chairman conveys the time, place, and nature of the hearing in writing to the person issuing the request for reconsideration and to the Library Director.
4. At the hearing, the person issuing the request and the Library Director shall state their cases. The Board Chairman will serve as Mediator with the sole power to call additional witnesses as needed. The Library Board will meet separately and issue their decision in writing.

During this procedure the questioned material shall be in the possession, first, of the Library Director, and then, if a hearing is necessary, will be made available to the Library Board members until a decision is reached.

## **APPENDIX: A**

### **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

## APPENDIX: B

### *The Freedom to Read Statement*

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free

flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

APPENDIX: C

**Patron's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials**

**CABARRUS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

CONCORD LIBRARY – 27 UNION STREET, N., CONCORD NC 28025

Please submit to Library Director in writing. Thank you.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Patron's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Format \_\_\_\_\_ Call # on spine \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the entire work? If not, what parts? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Why do you want the Library to reconsider this material? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_